

discussed, may shew the doubtfulness at least of such an objection. Let us suppose that midway in the forced descent of prices, and in the unanticipated, but the not less real ascent of profits, that very record had been called for by the Commons. Would it not even then have been maintained,—and more especially then, indeed, when profits were so much smaller than they now are,—that prices had already reached their minimum, and that it was therefore "utterly impossible" to reduce them further without converting them into "losing prices," "ruinous" to the shareholders? [This, by the way, is no mere hypothetical case. It has again and again occurred, and that, too, midway in the forced descent of prices and ascent of profits.] And would it not then as now have been stoutly maintained,—and with far greater seeming reason than now,—that the most "close cutting" and "shaving" calculation had already been resorted to in the unwilling and "perilous" endeavour to lower the previous prices to their ultimatum, and that in fact they could not then be made any lower? And yet what a wondrous teacher is Old Time! For that which would have then been confidently regarded as a ruinously low price, yielding a pitiful profit on account of its very lowness of amount, has now been proved, and that too over and over again, to have been to the shareholders a ruinously high price, yielding a pitifully low profit on account of its very highness of charge! In short, we have again and again demonstrated that the mere bareness or poverty of the profit on any one price for gas is no criterion, no rule, why that price may not be immensely reduced, with commensurate increase of profit in place of equivalent loss.

We sincerely trust, then, that none of our legislators will fallaciously conclude that, since a certain present average price produces only a certain average and apparently, or really, moderate profit on the full amount of fixed or authorized capital, or even merely on the capital paid up, it will therefore be unadvisable,—"hard upon the shareholders," or against their best interests, to insist on, or assist in, lowering that price any further. Let any one, inclined to argue thus just put the case to himself, now put by us to the common sense of all, and follow it out to its legitimate issue. Let him suppose that the "Abstract of Return" had been called for by and made to the Commons ten years ago, when the prices charged for gas were a vast deal higher, and the profits resulting therefrom hence far lower on the average than they now are, though these same prices were a great deal lower than they had previously been, and the profits, it may be, as much higher than they had previously been. He surely now must see that a moderate or even a paltry dividend on such a price was no rule nor reason why that price should not be steadily and most unmercifully, though gradually, cut down, not only for the public good, but for the best and highest pecuniary interests of those very shareholders who have since been proved to have been the more immediate and immense pecuniary profiteers by such wholesale prunings of superfluous and by no means fruit-yielding charges.

What use our legislators may be now induced to make of these returns remains to be seen; but in the midst of so enormous a mockery and a delusion, as we have proved them to be on their absolute merits, relatively instructive though they also be, there is no one conclusion so obvious as that which speaks with trumpet tongue in favour of further reductions in price, to almost an indefinite extent, in order to lead to that universal use, not a tithe of which gas, either for light or for heat, has yet attained, although it is an article, the prime cost of which, when the compensatory value of the products of its manufacture is deducted, has again and again been proved to be, in many instances, comparatively not much higher than that of water, which, in fact, is next to nothing.

BRIGHTON COLLEGE COMPETITION.—A correspondent informs us that the first design selected by the committee of the proposed Brighton College, is by Mr. G. G. Scott; and the second by Mr. G. S. Clarke.

NOTES IN THE PROVINCES.

THE following tenders were lodged for the erection of the Albion Chapel, in St. Mary's-street, Southampton:—

W. Gambling, Southampton...	£3,500 0
Nicholson, London	3,495 0
G. Brown, Southampton	3,445 0
T. A. Gates, ditto	3,141 10
A. Hillier, ditto	2,938 0

After much consideration, the committee accepted Mr. Gates' tender. The works will be begun forthwith. According to the *Hampshire Independent*, the amount of funds now raised is about one-half the requisite sum, and the members of committee were all to sign the contract.—It has been resolved to erect a market-house by subscription at Botley, from plans submitted by Mr. Charles Pink, of Hambleton, and on a site given, with 1000. and old materials on the site, by Mr. James Warner.

—On the 10th inst. a new church was opened at Woolhampton, near Newbury, Berks, by the Roman Catholic Bishop, Dr. Wiseman. The church, which adjoins a large boarding-school, is of the late perpendicular style, studied from the remains of the old palace and chapel of the Archbishops of Canterbury at Croydon. It is built of brick made on the spot, with Bath stone dressings. The internal dimensions are 82 ft. by 40 ft. The parts of the church are a chancel, 22 ft. by 18 ft., with two side chapels; a nave, 60 ft. by 18 ft., side aisles and organ-galleries, baptistery, and penitentiary at the western end. The chief decoration of the whole is an altar-window of stained-glass, by Mr. Wailes, of Newcastle, representing the Crucifixion. The building is from the designs of Mr. G. J. Wigley.—The foundation-stone of a new church has been laid at Leverstock-green, Hemel Hempstead, by the Countess of Bridgewater, who, it is said, handled the silver trowel 'in true masonic style.' We begin to have great misgivings about the integrity of the grand secret in the insidious face of so profound a plot as this, by which the ladies now seem bent on circumventing the tip-top object, ground, and basis of their currency: if its very foundations and its ceremonial strongholds are to be thus undermined, what is to become of the grand superstructure?—It will all go to 'Jachin and Boaz,' when the ladies 'harmonize in the light.'—The *Lincolnshire Times* describes a large house, of the Elizabethan school, erected on the site of the late City Arms, at Lincoln, from plans by Mr. Bellamy, a young local architect. It is said to be in good keeping with the Guildhall, Old Stonebow, and other works of 'the sages of old.'—The new church of Holy Trinity, Horneastle, was consecrated on 27th ult. It will accommodate 400, seat-free, and was built by subscription.—Tuesday week the foundation stone of the new Disentling Chapel in Hope-street, Liverpool, was laid in the site adjoining the Philharmonic Concert-hall. It is to be occupied by the Rev. James Martineau, and his congregation, from Paradise-street Chapel, and is to be in the early Gothic style. Messrs. Barry and Brown, of Liverpool, are the architects.—The receipts of the public baths and washhouses, at Manchester, during the first year of their existence, were 402l. 15s. 10d.; the expenditure, 376l. 8s. 9d., including a bill of 30l. 13s. for water.—The new National School, Minster parish, Beverley, is now in course of erection. The committee of the St. Mary's and St. Nicholas' schools have purchased the old National School, conditional on the approval of Government. It is proposed to take down the present building, and erect a new school-room and master's house, at a cost of about 800l.—The Poor-law Board, in approving of a plan, 'forwarded to them,' for certain alterations of the Bradford Workhouse, suggested a wrought-iron tie-beam for the roof. In the proceedings of the local authorities, Mr. J. Wilson said he thought it would be as well if the Poor-law Board would mind their own business, and let other people's alone. Mr. Tetley said that the Poor-law Board had better send their own architect from London.

—The foundation stone of a new church was laid in the village of Follifoot, near Knarsborough, on Monday week.—St. John's Church, Upper Thong, Holmfirth, consecrated on Thursday week before last, is in the perpendicular style: nave, 78 ft. by 27 ft. 4 in.; chancel, 26 ft. by 18 ft.; north transept, 24 ft.

by 18 ft. 6 in.; south transept, 12 ft. square. The church accommodates 800 persons—about 300 free. Mr. E. H. Shellard, of Manchester, is the architect. Estimated cost, 4,000l. A parsonage-house is to be added.—Saint Matthew's Church, West Town, Dewsbury, was consecrated by the Bishop of Ripon on Saturday week. It is built from a design of Messrs. Bonomi and Cory, architects, Durham, and consists of a tower, a nave, north and south aisles, with chancel and south porch. There are 527 sittings (all free). The north and south side walls of the chancel, and the east end walls of the aisles, have arches built in them to allow of future enlargement of the church, by the addition of chancel aisles, whereby about 150 more free sittings can be made, when required. The style is that of a parish church at the close of fifteenth century—perpendicular Gothic. The cost, including an expensive site, and repair fund, is about 2,800l., partly raised by local subscriptions and by grants from Church Building Societies. The painted windows, wood-work in chancel, pulpit, reading desk, and lectern, &c., in oak, carved, were gifts.

ROYAL INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS.

On the 8th instant, a special meeting of the Institute was held, to take into consideration a memorial submitted to the council in April, 1847, urging the formation by the Institute, of a benevolent fund for the less fortunate members of the profession, a copy of which will be found in the last volume of *THE BUILDER*. It was signed by thirty-four architects. Mr. Bellamy, Vice-President, who was in the chair, laid before the meeting a summary of the proceedings which had been taken upon it, the result of which was, that the council had adopted the report of a joint committee (part memorialists, part members of council), advising the formation of such a fund, and recommended it to the consideration of the members at large. The rule of the Artists' Benevolent Fund, that recipients must be authors of "works known and esteemed by the public," would shut out many deserving members of the profession, and those connected with it. Commuication had been opened with the officers of that fund, by some who thought that the desired end might be better attained by an arrangement with them than by a fresh fund.—Mr. C. Fowler stated what had been done in that respect.—Mr. Pownall supported at considerable length the desire of the memorialists, and moved a resolution confirming the recommendation contained in the report of the joint committee.—A long discussion followed as to the mode of carrying out the views of the memorialists, and as to the necessity for the fund.* An opinion was generally expressed, that if raised at all, it was quite unnecessary to give the administration of it to another society. Ultimately, on the motion of Mr. Angell, a resolution was passed, declaring the importance of establishing such a fund, and appointing a committee of nine, to consider in what way it could best be effected, and to report hereafter.

At an ordinary meeting held on the 15th, Mr. J. W. Papworth read a paper in illustration of some drawings of Prentice, ancient and modern; and Mr. J. Thomson read some observations on the ancient village church of Leigh-de-la-Mere, Wilts.

ENDOWMENT OF SHAKESPEARE'S HOUSE.

—The amateur performances on Monday and Wednesday, at the Haymarket Theatre, for the endowment of Shakespeare's house, went off well. Mr. John Forster, Mr. Charles Dickens, Mr. Mark Lemon, and others, played admirably, and well sustained the reputation which they have acquired in this new line of art. The house was filled with writers and artists; and the Chief Commissioner of Woods and Works was one of the heartiest laughers, on the second night, at the personation of *Flexible*, in "Love, Law, and Physic," by the genial author of "Pickwick," and "Dumby."

* In the course of the discussion reference was made to the manner in which architects and architecture had been treated in the Royal Academy on the present occasion, and was loudly responded to by the meeting.